

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 IO-10 SAM-01 SAJ-01 /082 W

----- 069515

R 081355Z APR 75

FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3402

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUANDA 0372

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS MILI PDEV AO

SUBJECT: ROUNDUP OF EVENTS

1. THERE FOLLOWS A NUMBER OF ITEMS OF INTEREST CONNECTED
WITH THE RECENT FIGHTING THAT WE DID NOT REPORT LAST WEEK.

2. THE MPLA MINISTER OF INFORMATION, MANUEL MONTEIRO,
GAVE ME AN INSIGHT INTO THE STRATEGY MPLA PLANS TO USE WHEN IT
COMES TIME TO DISARM CIVILIANS, AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE AGREEMENT,
OR PROTOCOL, AS THEY CALL IT HERE, SIGNED ON MARCH 28 (LUANDA 0331).
WHEN I ASKED HIM HOW THE GOVERNMENT PLANNED TO PROCEED, HE SAID
THAT ALL THE ARMS ARE "ON THE ASPHALT," A TERM USED HERE FOR
THE EUROPEAN SECTORS OF THE CITY. MPLA CAN CONFUSE THE ISSUE AND
BLOCK ANY ACTION TO TAKE WEAPONS FROM ITS ACTIVISTS BY INSISTING
UPON A GENERAL DISARMING OF WHITES AS WELL AS BLACKS. MONTEIRO
ALSO TOLD ME THAT THE PRESS CENSORSHIP IMPOSED BY THE PRESIDENTIAL
COUNCIL DURING THE CRISIS WAS ILLEGAL, AS THAT BODY HAD NO
AUTHORITY TO TAKE SUCH MEASURES ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE.

3. MPLA WANTS THE OFFICIAL RADIO STATION FREE OF RESTRAINTS,
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BUT ON MARCH 31, WHEN THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, ACTING FOR THE

PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL, MODIFIED THE BAN ON RADIO PROGRAMS, ALL PRIVATE STATIONS WERE ALLOWED TO RESUME NORMAL BROADCASTING, BUT THE OFFICIAL RADIO STATION CAME UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL AND CAN CARRY ONLY MUSIC, STRAIGHT NEWS AND COMMUNIQUE. MPLA OPPOSED THE DECISION AND DOES NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE SUPERVISION OF THE STATION'S ACTIVITIES. MONTEIRO, MPLA PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL MEMBER LOPO DE NASCIMENTO AND MPLA MINISTER OF FINANCE, SAYDI MINGAS GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE ON APRIL 4. LOPO DO NASCIMENTO THREATENED TO RESIGN WHEN THE OFFICIAL RADIO STATION BROADCAST A CUT VERSION OF THE CONFERENCE. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MET ON APRIL 5 TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE AND IT WAS AGREED TO RE-BROADCAST THE PRESS CONFERENCE IN ITS ENTIRETY, THUS ENDING THAT FLARE-UP.

4. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MET ON APRIL 3 FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE FIGHTING. AGREEMENT WAS REACHED TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE PUBLIC SECURITY POLICE TO THE ANGOLAN POLICE CORPS AND TO TOTALLY DISMANTLE THE PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION OF VOLUNTEERS AND CIVIL DEFENSE OF ANGOLA (OPVDCA). ACCORDING TO REPORTS I HAVE RECEIVED, THE MEETING WAS CHARACTERIZED BY RESTRAINT ON ALL SIDES AND EVERYONE WAS CAREFUL NOT TO PROVOKE ANOTHER SHOUTING MATCH. THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND THE SECRETARY OF LABOR, BOTH MPLA, APPEALED FOR COOPERATION FROM ALL FACTIONS AND SAID THAT NO MATTER WHAT HAS HAPPENED THE GOVERNMENT MUST GET ON WITH ITS WORK. FORTUNATELY, THE GROUP DID NOT HAVE TO CONSIDER THE VIOLENCE AS THAT MATTER HAS BEEN TURNED OVER TO A SPECIAL COMMISSION FOR AN INVESTIGATION.

5. UNITA PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL MEMBER JOSE N'DELE TOLD ME LAST WEEK OF THE TROUBLE HE HAD MAINTAINING UNITA'S POLICY OF NON-INVOLVEMENT IN THE BATTLE BETWEEN MPLA AND FNLA. HE WAS ON THE PHONE ALL NIGHT WITH A UNITA UNIT PINNED DOWN IN A GHETTO BY CROSSFIRE FROM THE OTHER TWO GROUPS. THE UNITA TROOPS WANTED TO SHOOT THEIR WAY OUT TO SAFETY, BUT N'DELE PREVAILED UPON THEM, HE SAID, TO STAY ON THE FLOOR AND WAIT IT OUT. AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF INTENSE SHOOTING EVERYTHING IN THE UNITA BUILDING WAS DESTROYED, BUT N'DELE INSISTED AND THE MEN EVENTUALLY GOT OUT WITHOUT MAJOR INJURIES. EARLIER REPORTS
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WE RECEIVED OF UNITA DEATHS TURNED OUT TO BE UNFOUNDED. THEY LOST NO ONE DURING THE EXCITEMENT, ALTHOUGHIN SOME AREAS FNLA ELEMENTS TRIED VERY HARD TO INDUCE UNITA TO TAKE A HAND IN THE BATTLE.

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6. N'DELE ALSO RELATED HOW HE SAVED THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FROM AN MPLA SCHEME TO USE HIM FOR ITS OWN ENDS. AS N'DELE TELLS IT, MPLA STRATEGY DURING THE VIOLENCE WAS TO GET JOURNALISTS AND OTHERS TO VISIT THE SCENES OF PURPORTED EXECUTIONS BY THE FNLA AND SEE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT HAD HAPPENED. WHEN GENERAL CARDOSO TOLD N'DELE HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO VISIT ONE SUCH SITE, THE UNITA OFFICIAL WARNED HIM NOT TO GO. HE SAID THAT "MASSACRES" CAN BE EASILY STAGED AND THAT IF CARDOSO WENT HE WOULD BE HOOKED. BECAUSE OF HIS POSITION HE COULD NOT CALL MPLA LIARS OR DENY HE HAD SEEN A NUMBER OF CORPSES THAT APPARED TO HAVE BEEN SUMMARILY EXECUTED. THE UPSHOT WOULD BE TO INTRODUCE THE HIGH COMMISSIONER INTO THE CHARGES AND COUNTER-CHARGES, REDUCE HIS EFFECTIVENESS AND MAKE HIM A CANDIDATE FOR REMOVAL FROM OFFICE. CARDOSO HEEDED N'DELE'S ADVICE. N'DELE MAY NOT BE A STRONG PERSONALITY, CARDOSO'S OWN WORDS TO ME A SHORT TIME AGO, BUT HE COMES OFF AS A VERY CAGEY INDIVIDUAL WHO CAN TRIM ALMOST AS WELL AS JONAS SAVIMBI. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER HAS BEEN FORCED BY EVENTS TO CONSULT

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FREQUENTLY WITH N'DELE AND SEEMS TO BE RELYING MORE AND MORE UPON HIM FOR ADVICE.

7. THE EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS BETWEEN FNLA AND MPLA FINALLY GOT UNDER WAY LATE LAST WEEK AND ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT HAVE PRECISE FIGURES IT NOW APPEARS THE EXCHANGES HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. IT IS DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHERE THE MATTER STANDS, AS BOTH SIDES KEEP ARRESTING NEW PEOPLE AND EXCHANGING THEM.

8. SINCE ITS REAPPEARANCE LAST WEEK AFTER AN EIGHT DAY BAN, THE FNLA-CONTROLLED NEWSPAPER, A PROVINCIA, HAS MADE A VALIANT EFFORT TO PRESENT ALL THE NEWS, NO MATTER HOW DISTASTEFUL. THEY CARRIED A FRONT PAGE STORY ON AGOSTINHO NETO'S TRIP TO EUROPE AND REFRAINED FROM ANY CRITICISM OF THE MPLA LEADER. THEY CARRIED A "MPLA PRESS CONFERENCE IN ITS ENTIRETY. MPLA MINISTER OF INFORMATION MONTEIRO VISITED THE PAPER ON APRIL 5 TO CHAT WITH THE NEW MANAGEMENT. HE WAS UNDER IMPRESSION THAT HIS WORDS WOULD BE CARRIED IN THE PAPER AS AN INTERVIEW. WHEN NOTHING HE SAID APPEARED HE INQUIRED AND WAS TOLD THE TAPE HAD BEEN ACCIDENTALLY ERASED. THE PAPER RECORDED HIM AGAIN IN WHICH HE RECALLED WHAT HE HAD SAID THE FIRST TIME AND A PROVINCCIA PUBLISHED THAT ON APRIL 8. I DO NOT EXPECT THIS FORCED COURTESY TO LAST VERY LONG; THERE WILL BE MORE VERBAL FIREWORKS VERY SHORTLY TO ACCOMPANY THE SHOOTING.
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